



NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Speaker of the House Andy Tobin, R-Prescott (Dist. 1)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HELPING DETECT BREAST CANCER EARLY

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX (Wednesday, March 19, 2014) – The Health Committee for the Arizona House of Representatives unanimously passed legislation, Senate Bill 1225, Wednesday mandating facilities performing mammography to notify women that the accuracy of test results is reduced as tissue density increases.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in females in the United States, according to a report published by the Arizona Department of Health Services. Nationwide breast cancer kills nearly 40,000 women annually. In Arizona, more than 3,500 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year.

Approximately 50 percent of women undergoing mammography screening are classified as having either heterogeneously dense or extremely dense breast. The sensitivity of mammography, however, is reduced as background breast tissue density increases. When mammography is the only screening test performed, detection decreases by 10 to 20 percent for women with dense breasts.

Having information about breast cancer, tissue density and detection limitations saved my life, said Suzanne Berger who signed into the House Health Committee hearing in support of the legislation. "This [knowledge] enabled me to detect my breast cancer early."

Since 1989 early detection efforts have helped to save more than 2.8 million women. SB 1225 would heighten early detection efforts, when the cancer is likely to be smaller and confined to the breast.

"It is essential that all women in these circumstances have this kind of notification," said Speaker of the House Andy Tobin. "Especially given that early detection has been proven to help reduce breast cancer deaths."

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